

Supporting Youth and Young Adults with Autism Spectrum in Learning How to Get a Job and Work

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ASD Career Links

- ▶ Funded through National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)
- ▶ Research related to Vocational Rehabilitation Models for Individuals with ASD
- ▶ One of 4 research studies

ASD Career Links

- ▶ Purpose of the study:
 - Understand how 2 different types of job training programs work for young people with ASD
 - School Based
 - Community Based



Diagnostic Characteristics that impact work:

- ▶ Impairment in social interaction
 - Non-verbal behaviors
 - Eye gaze, facial expression, body posture, use of gestures
 - Peer interaction
 - Relationship typically not age referenced
 - Difficulty sharing interaction/enjoyment with others
 - Difficulty with social reciprocity

Diagnostic Characteristics that impact work:

- ▶ Communication Impairments
 - Idiosyncratic language
 - Difficulty with pragmatics (use) of language
 - Seemingly better with visual or written language over spoken language
 - Don't always mean what they say or say what they mean

Diagnostic Characteristics that impact work:

- ▶ Behaviors/Interests
 - Rigidity
 - Adherence to routines
 - Stereotyped motor movements

Other Issues at Work:

- ▶ Anxiety and mood disorders
- ▶ Seizures
- ▶ Attention deficits
- ▶ Executive function difficulties
- ▶ Motor planning deficits

Functional Limitations Frequently Present in ASD

- ▶ Communication
 - Receptive and Expressive
 - Conversing
 - Not readily understood on first (or even second or third) contact

Functional Limitations Frequently Present in ASD

- ▶ Self Direction
 - Supervision on regular to constant basis
 - Supervision to begin and finish tasks and make decisions
 - Difficulty working independently

Functional Limitations Frequently Present in ASD

- Shifting focus from one activity to task to next without prompting
- Difficulty adjusting to new situations or changes
- Easily distracted/short attention span
- Impatient/impulsive
- Unaware of negative consequences of decisions

Functional Limitations Frequently Present in ASD

- ▶ Self Care
 - Money or budgeting
 - Cannot live independently without supports

Functional Limitations Frequently Present in ASD

- Needs reinforcement or reminders to maintain appropriate personal hygiene
- May need support to comply with medication

Functional Limitations Frequently Present in ASD

- ▶ Interpersonal
 - Significant social withdrawal
 - Significant poor relationships/Inappropriate Behaviors or frequent conflicts

Functional Limitations Frequently Present in ASD

- Serious problems interpreting and responding
- Does not understand acceptable levels and types of interaction
- Requires frequent intervention from supervisor

Functional Limitations Frequently Present in ASD

- ▶ Work Tolerance
 - Needs frequent breaks to compose and organize self
- ▶ Work Skills
 - Needs significantly more support or supervision
 - May need technology

Positives at Work!

- ▶ Rigidity
- ▶ Insistence on routine
- ▶ High attention to detail

Positives at Work!

- ▶ Excellent visual pattern skills
- ▶ Many prefer to work in isolation
- ▶ Conscientious
- ▶ High degree of information in interest areas

Supports at Work

► Communication

- Be direct
- The fewer the words the better
- Use written or picture instructions
- Be concrete

Supports at Work

◦ Avoid

- Idioms (Hold your horses, jump the gun, second thoughts, etc.)
- Sarcasm
- Double meanings
- Nicknames

Supports at Work

► Give directions

- Clear and concise
- Break big tasks into small pieces
- Demonstrate tasks
- Talk in an adult manner
- Use pictures or written directions

Supports at Work

► Capitalize on Strengths

- Give a clear workspace that is not prone to distractions
- Develop consistent workspace that lets the person know
 - Where to get supplies
 - How to get help
 - How to move from task to task

Supports at Work

- What to do when one task is complete
- Give tasks that . . .
 - Are concrete
 - Can be finished without lots of interaction or interruptions
 - Will keep the person busy most of the time

Supports at Work

► To avoid problems:

- Try to avoid changes in the routine
- If a change is necessary, give advance warning

Supports at Work

- Develop visual cues and systems for the person to cope with the social environments
- If person allows it, tell co-workers about disability

Supports at Work

- ▶ Social Skills
 - Teach greetings and other routine social interactions
 - Be aware of bullies at work

Supports at Work

- Teach routines for down time (e.g.: what to do on a break, how to look busy when there is nothing to do, etc.)
- Make a list of forbidden comments and topics
- Plan for hygiene and personal emergencies

Required Elements for the Transition/Employment Plan

- ▶ Positive Behavior Support
- ▶ Intensive, Structured Instruction
- ▶ Comprehensible Environments
- ▶ Routines
- ▶ Parent Support
- ▶ Focus on Strengths
 - Focus on communication and social Skills

Paul

- ▶ Strengths
 - Excellent work ethic
 - Able to understand concepts
- ▶ Challenges:
 - Difficulty with accepting criticism
 - Cursing
 - Episodes of intense anger outbursts including aggression

Paul

- ▶ Intensive Social Skills Training
- ▶ Accepting Criticism
- ▶ Supports:
 - Check in and check out on emotions/feelings
 - Think Sheet
 - Level Plan

Ten and walk away from the situation
 and say "I need to move on" go to a safe
 place

 I apologize for [redacted], I'm sorry I didn't give
 personal space I'm sorry for making
 threats about you, and I'm mostly sorry
 for putting my hands on you.
 Student Signature: [redacted] Date: 3-18-11

	1	2	3	4	5
A supervisor gives me feedback / constructive criticism.					
Someone or something interrupts me while I am working.					
A supervisor tells me to correct a mistake.					
When I don't understand what someone is saying to me.					
When I disagree with co-worker.					
When a co-worker asks for help.					
When a supervisor tells me to do something.					
Group work with peers / co-workers.					
When others make suggestions on how to do something.					

I accepted correction when I:
 1. Looked at my supervisor
 2. Listened
 3. Said "ok"
 4. Corrected my work / **Do it**
 5. Reported back to my supervisor

 I asked for help when I needed it.

 I admitted when I made a mistake

 I respected other's personal space when I:
 1. Stayed at least 1 arms length away from others when in hall, on stairs
 2. Stood quietly with my hands at side and looked up when on elevator
 3. Kept my hands to myself
 4. Left other's belongings alone

 Self Monitoring Checklist

 I accepted correction when I:
 1. Looked at my supervisor
 2. Listened
 3. Said "ok"
 4. Corrected my work / **Do it**
 5. Reported back to my supervisor

 I asked for help when I needed it.

Paul's Employment

- ▶ Ricoh/Print Shop
 - Mail delivery
 - Metering mail
 - Copying/binding




Aiden

- ▶ Strengths:
 - Engaging personality
 - Strives to please his employer
- ▶ Challenges
 - Tactile Stimulated
 - Invades personal space
 - Cursing
 - Problem Solving when an issue arises

Aiden

- ▶ "Professional" work habits
- ▶ Body positioning
- ▶ Building professional friendships
- ▶ Supports:
 - Visual aids
 - Role play





"The High Road"

"THE HIGH ROAD"

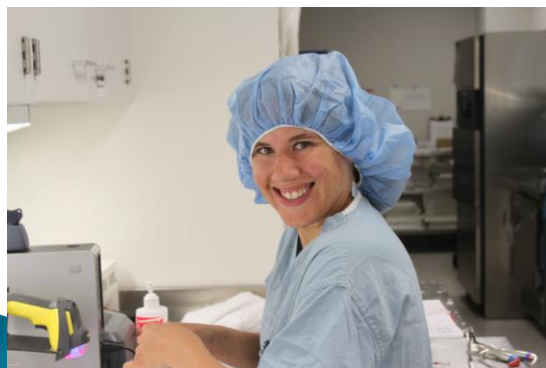
1. Say "I'm sorry"
2. Walk Away
3. Call Alissa /Supervisor

Aiden's Employment

- Infection Control
 - Maintain Infection Control carts
 - Remove supplies, wipe down, return materials to drawers
 - Restock and charge departments for supplies



Katie



Katie

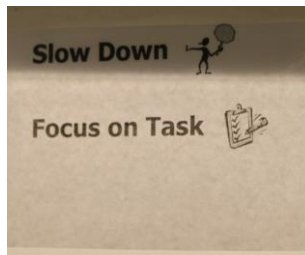
- Strengths:
 - High energy
 - Outgoing personality
 - Hard worker
- Challenges:
 - High Energy
 - Emotional highs and lows
 - Focus
 - Interpersonal boundaries



Katie

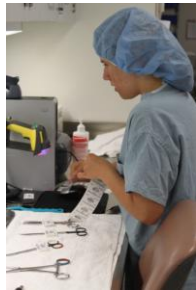
- Pacing
- Setting personal boundaries
- Developing professional relationships
- Supports:
 - Visual supports
 - Relaxation exercises





Katie's Employment

- ▶ Surgical Care Technician – Main Operating Room
 - Stocking supplies
 - Replenish blanket warmers
 - Stock scrub in sinks
 - Turns over patient rooms



David

- ▶ Strengths:
 - ORGANIZED
 - ORGANIZED
 - ORGANIZED
- ▶ Challenges:
 - Motivated by food & compu
 - Speech volume



David

- ▶ Behavior plan with incentives
 - Reviewed before & after each shift
- ▶ Visual cue
 - Incredible 5 point scale

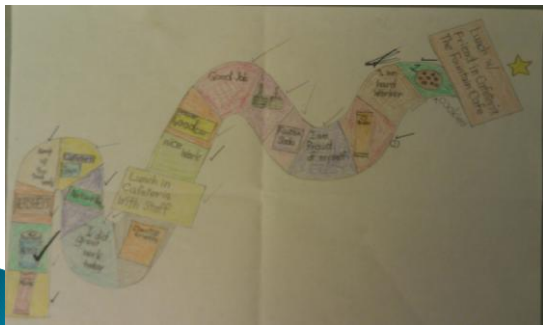


Incredible 5 Point Scale



Food Dilemmas

- ▶ Game board to earn cafeteria time



David's Employment



- ▶ Main Pharmacy
 - Pull outdated drugs
 - Organize (by date) all meds
 - Document meds that have been discarded



James

- ▶ Strengths:
 - Endearing, witty personality
 - Ability to "look" busy
- ▶ Challenges:
 - Comments are perceived as rude
 - Pace
 - Productivity
 - Concern for work quality

James

- ▶ Supports:
 - Structured schedule
 - Productivity
- ▶ Pace



James' Employment

- ▶ Intensive Care Unit
 - Stock drawers/cabinets in patient rooms
 - Take out the laundry baskets
 - Prepare rooms for the next patient
 - Remove the needle boxes when they are full
 - Make flow charts
 - Stock lab trays
 - Check refrigerator temperatures
- ▶ Much larger unit
- ▶ Focus on production



More Fun Behaviors

- ▶ "Runners"
- ▶ High Anxiety
- ▶ Structure, routine, some more structure and a little more routine
- ▶ Delayed expression of emotion

Additional Supports

- ▶ Weekly consultation with Behavior Analyst
- ▶ Consistent structure to seemingly unstructured intervals of time
- ▶ Defining idioms, work expectations and social skills
- ▶ Visual Supports

Additional Supports

- ▶ Develop self monitoring checklists and reinforcement programs
- ▶ Role playing and practice for social skills
- ▶ Intensive instruction and monitoring of student success

Questions? More Information?

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